

THE
SATURDAY REVIEW
OF
POLITICS, LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

No. 3,226 Vol. 124

25 August 1917

[REGISTERED AS A
NEWSPAPER.] 6d.**CONTENTS.**

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
NOTES OF THE WEEK	137	CORRESPONDENCE:		REVIEWS:	
		What a Vice-Admiral would do		From Shakespeare to O'Henry .	148
		with us	145	The Western Front	149
LEADING ARTICLES:		The Russian Revolution and the		Sven Hedin, Nobleman	149
The Encircling Power	140	Near East	145	Our Money and the State.	150
The House of Commons Revisited. .	140	Women and War	146	Palestine: the Rebirth of an Ancient	
The Balance of the Baltic	141	The Importance of being Conserva-		People	151
The Battle of the Sinking Fund . .	142	tive	147	THE CITY	152
Internationalism	143	A Story from the Sea	147	This Week's Books	153
Switzerland and the War	144	The Courage of the English . . .	147		
		German Sailors on British Ships .	147		
		Sale of Honours	147		
		The Pope and Germany	147		

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

All day and all night the noise of battle rolls along the Western front between the British and French armies and their enemies. To the north of Verdun, round Ypres, and in front of Lens, the Allied troops and artillery are steadily pushing back the German lines, capturing villages, guns and prisoners. On the Isonzo line, too, the Italians are doing well, and have taken 13,000 prisoners. At Salonica there has been a great fire: we have not heard of any other event in that place. General Hindenburg tells his Chancellor that "he never felt more confident," and his prospects were never better. Everybody therefore is pleased. Hindenburg likes being punched: and we like punching him. In the meantime, the Germans are withdrawing the civilian population from Alsace.

There were two attacks by hostile aircraft on Wednesday, the one by Zeppelins on the coast of Yorkshire, the other by the aeroplanes over Dover and Ramsgate. The Zeppelins dropped fifteen bombs over villages, killing one man, and we are informed that one of these airships was brought down at sea by an aeroplane starting from the deck of one of our men-of-war. At Dover and Ramsgate eleven persons were killed and thirteen injured. When are the Americans coming over with their fleet of airships? We want to see the tall tower at Cologne topple down, and the basin at Hamburg a smoking ruin, and the Opera House at Frankfort a wreck. The French have a proverb that "Revenge is a dish which is best eaten cold." Our revenge is getting cold, and we are getting hungry.

We find that an article published last week on the return of Mr. Asquith to power has been taken by some of our readers to mean that we recommended such a step. The article was signed, "By an Old Fogey," was obviously written from the Reform Club, and represented the views of a Liberal. Mr. Asquith, judging by his recent speeches, is eager to replace the

Irish Nationalists by the Labour Party as his *souteneur*. Who Mr. Asquith's "mackerel" may be is a matter of indifference to us. We only wish to see in power an honest and cool Minister, who knows what he wants, and has the courage to get it. Sir Edward Carson comes nearer to this description than anybody else.

What would happen to the Entente Powers if they were foolish enough to enter upon peace negotiations with the German Government is plain enough from Lord Newton's admission about the exchange of prisoners. The German Government sent duly accredited officials to meet Lord Newton and others at The Hague, there to negotiate terms for the treatment and exchange of prisoners. After meetings, which lasted seven days, Lord Newton and the German officials agreed in writing to certain terms. The German Government refuses to carry out their bargain, because the port must be Hull, and not Southwold. It has been pointed out to the German Government that there is neither harbour nor landing-stage for any but the smallest excursion steamers at Southwold: but they are obstinate.

Lord Newton tells us why. The German Government has told its credulous subjects, through its slavish and corrupt Press, that the North Sea is under the control of the German Admiral, and that all the principal shipping ports are blockaded by German men-of-war. Herr Ballin, of course, knows better: but the stupid and ignorant *bourgeoisie* really believes that there is no traffic on the North Sea, except the few passenger steamers that are allowed to run between Holland and places like Southwold. If the exchanged German prisoners were to be brought to Hull and there embarked for the Fatherland, what a story they would have to tell to their friends and relations at home! Hull port open, and crowded with merchant shipping of all kinds, loading and unloading cargoes, and rubbing sides with warships of all denominations! If this tale were told in Germany, the whole fabric of German

mendacity would tumble like a house of cards. And this is the Government with which we are asked to negotiate peace.

The strike of the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen has been declared off, for the present at all events. Had it been persisted in, the transport of troops and munitions to the front would have been held up. Granted that the hours of the engine-drivers and firemen are long, they have received a bonus of 15s. a week; and as the *Daily Express* asks, do the men in the trenches get an 8-hour day? Sir Albert Stanley has pledged the Government to retain control of the railways for some time after the war, and to consider then any reasonable request for a reduction of hours. The Munitions Act of 1915 (a practical repeal of the Trades Disputes Act of 1906) gives the Government power to prohibit a strike as illegal, in which case any expenditure of Union funds on a strike becomes illegal. Mr. Bromley was reminded of this fact, and it is possible that it had something to do with his patriotic retreat.

After the General Election of 1900 Lord Salisbury wrote to Lord Cranbrook, "Power has passed from the hands of statesmen; into whose hands has it passed?" Were he alive to-day, Lord Salisbury would be more perplexed than ever. The *Times*, which crushes the most important debates in Parliament into a column and a half, giving a line or two to each member, devoted five columns on Wednesday to a verbatim report of the speeches at the Labour Conference, not even omitting such choice flowers of rhetoric as "renegade" and "dirty dog" hurled at Mr. Barnes. We ourselves are not sure whether the centre of political gravity is at the Central Hall, Westminster, or at Petrograd. We incline to the belief that at present Monsieur (by the way, what is the correct prefix of reference to a Russian gentleman?) Kerenski is the ruler of the British Empire.

Our Prime Minister compared M. Kerenski to St. Just, "that great revolutionary character," who, after chopping off the heads of his colleagues, had his own chopped off in company with Robespierre and other "great revolutionary characters." We earnestly hope that Mr. Lloyd George is misinformed about M. Kerenski's character, and that the rumours about his health are untrue. Because it is clear that Old England is to be reconstructed by New Russia, and we do not wish our Reconstructor to turn out a murderer or a *poitrinaire*. Both Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Henderson change their policy about the Stockholm Conference as often as M. Kerenski changes his. Seeing that M. Kerenski's Government and his Army may be gone to-morrow, could anything be more ridiculous or more dangerous than this subservience?

Mr. Barnes made a brave and statesmanlike speech in this same Parliament of Labour, and spoke words which the revolutionary hotheads would do well to ponder quietly. "Do not think that you are going to carry the Labour movement about with you in your pockets at Labour Conferences." In reply to an anarchist parrot, who called out "profiteers," Mr. Barnes said, "I ask you, with all the emphasis I can, to cast yourselves free from these miserable phrases. They have no relevance to the tragic situation in which we find ourselves." Dealing with the proposal to withdraw the Labour members from the Government, Mr. Barnes told his friends plainly that if he had to choose between the Government and Labour he would adhere to the former. "I am going to place my services, and to continue to place them, at the disposal of those who are guiding this country at the present time to the world's freedom." A clear-headed, honest and courageous man is Mr. Barnes.

Unless Great Britain is to follow Russia into the wilderness of anarchy, Parliament, which is still the

legislative power, would do well to look into this method of voting by cards, or in blocks, which the revolutionary Labourites use so daringly. Nobody but an idiot supposes that when the papers tell us that 1,500,000 votes have been given for or against a proposition, it represents the views of a million and a half working-men. Probably more than half the voters object strongly to the use made of their votes: but what can they do? By a majority of 3000 on a total vote of 2,465,000 the Labour Conference confirmed the decision of their Executive to send 24 delegates to Stockholm. But if the Labour delegates defied the Prime Minister with one hand, with the other they broke off all association with Messrs. Snowden and MacDonald, the Fabians and the British Socialist Party.

The Labour delegates refused to go to Stockholm in company with delegates from the Independent Labour Party, the British Socialist Party, and the Fabian Society. This is the most deliberate slap in the face which the revolutionists and anarchists have yet received. The Snowdens, MacDonalds, Sidney Webbs, Andersons, are far more dangerous, because better educated, than the Parliamentary leaders of Labour. When we say dangerous, we do not mean with regard to the war only, but with regard to the established order, and the constitution of society. These revolutionary "highbrows" are dying to finish the war in order to get to the more congenial and profitable work of abolishing the Monarchy, the Church, the House of Lords, and robbing the rich at their leisure. Messrs. Webb and Emil Davies are already licking their lips (in print) over the promised booty of a 10 per cent. tax on capital.

The Houses of Parliament have adjourned for a couple of months. The House of Commons has voted one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five millions for the war; and has made some progress with a revolutionary Bill to enfranchise women and raise the electorate from eight to twenty million votes. A Corn Law to protect agriculture by giving a guarantee to farmers has been passed, and another Geddes has been knighted, and added to the miscellaneous mob now governing the country. Mr. Austen Chamberlain has covered himself with glory by resigning his post as Secretary of State for India, and has been replaced by Mr. Montagu, it being the Premier's policy to surround himself with sandbags, or moneybags. The other culprits in the Mesopotamian muddle have remained in lucrative posts, or been left to chuckle in retirement, covered with stars and ribbons.

Were it not that they have only themselves to thank for the contempt into which they have fallen, we should pity members of Parliament. For them there are to be no holidays. "Are you watching your M.P.s?" is the heading of a leaderette in the *Weekly Dispatch*. "The House of Commons may be silent for two months, but that is no reason why M.P.s should be silent. They have a duty to perform. Let them go among their constituents, post them up with the latest position of the war, inquire into their grievances, if any, and be their guides, philosophers and friends. Bournemouth and Harrogate and Malvern Hills are no doubt very tempting to jaded M.P.s, but let them stick to their constituencies." All this impertinence would have been laughable, or rather impossible, ten or fifteen years ago. That it is seriously written to-day is due to the fact that M.P.s have voted themselves £400 a year out of the public purse. The modern member is merely a salaried National school teacher.

One of the chief causes of the impatience of the public with "the politicians," and the derisive laughter with which the mention of the House of Commons is generally greeted, is the belief that Ministerial

answers are not true. There is too much ground for this belief, if we read the evidence of Mr. Ian Macpherson, Under Secretary for War, before the Select Committee appointed to inquire into medical examinations and re-examinations. "I made my inquiry through Department C2, who got the facts from the proper department, and then drafted my reply in my own words," said Mr. Macpherson when heckled about one of his many inaccurate replies in the House. The Minister, when asked about a fact by notice of a question, asks Department C2 to inquire, and C2 inquires from D3, let us say; back from D3 to C2 comes the statement of facts; C2 passes it on to the Minister, who finally "puts it into his own words." The old game of "Russian Scandal" was nothing to this, or Dickens's Circumlocution Office.

The House of Lords has, on the whole, gained more prestige than the House of Commons since the war began. There are more dignity and ability in their debates, and people are beginning to remember that the Lords rejected the Naval Prize Bill, carried through the Lower House by Sir Edward Grey. Yet even the House of Lords is a show, a pompous pretence. Lord Curzon thinks he leads the House of Lords, but, in reality, he is a sonorous phantom. The real leaders of the House of Lords are Lord Northcliffe, and Lord Burnham, and Lady Bathurst. Now they have appointed a committee of thirty (fifteen peers and fifteen M.P.s) to inquire into the duties and powers of the Second Chamber, and how it may be strengthened. The trick of the Speaker's Conference is to be repeated, with Lord Bryce as thaumaturgist in the chair. We shall have a "miraculous report," which the Lords will be told they must swallow or provoke disunion during the war. If the Conference can devise a better Second Chamber than the House of Lords it will, indeed, be a miracle.

Amongst the many plans of reconstruction of which the magazines and newspapers are full, we have seen no mention of the construction of light railways in agricultural districts, one of the most urgent needs of the day. There are parts of Kent and the East Riding of Yorkshire which are as bare of means of communication as the Highlands. Light railways for the transport of vegetables and fruit and dairy produce to the industrial centres, and for the carriage of fish from the seaside to the inland towns and villages are much wanted. These light railways should act as feeders not competitors of the trunk lines. The Light Railways Act, which expires this year, has been a failure owing to the Board of Trade regulations, which have brought the cost of construction to about £8000 to £15,000 a mile, whereas the cost should not be more than £4000 a mile—we mean, of course, after the war, when labour will be plentiful and materials cheap.

Mr. Montagu is to visit India this winter to hatch a Home Rule Bill for the Peninsula, as if Ireland was not enough for the disintegrators of the Empire. We need not, however, be unduly alarmed, as Mr. Montagu, though a Radical, is not wholly destitute of intelligence. Even a few months at Simla and Calcutta may teach him the elementary truth preached by Sir Henry Maine, Mr. Rudyard Kipling and others, that East is East and West is West. We presume that Lord Curzon has been consulted about and agrees to this new departure?

If the reign of the white Raj is doomed, we have only Lord Hardinge and Sir Beauchamp Duff to thank for it. If there was an article of faith stoutly cherished by the average Briton, it was that our government of India was a model of efficiency. Since the supersession of John Company after the Mutiny sixty years ago, the government of India has been run by carefully

selected and highly educated Civil Servants, well paid, and with a handsome pension after twenty years. The pay and pension have, indeed, been much reduced by the fall in the rupee from 2s. to 1s. 4d.; but what the nation relied on chiefly was a highly centralised bureaucracy, with the Simla Secretariat and the Viceroy's Council at its head.

The great war, with the scandals of the Mesopotamian Campaign, has blown this pleasing belief in Indian bureaucracy to smithereens, along with many other soothing beliefs. How vitally history turns upon the character of individuals! Had a Sir John Lawrence been Viceroy, or had a Clive or a Coote or a Havelock been Commander-in-Chief in 1915, we should have heard nothing of this dangerous talk of India for the Indians. Although the Government of India has been irreparably damaged by the Mesopotamian fiasco, let us remember the frequent warning of Lord Salisbury that we hold India by the sword. If we do not continue to hold it by the sword, the congeries of races and creeds that inhabit the Peninsula will sink into the anarchy of Russia, and will either have to be reconquered by England, or will fall an easy prey to the armies of an organised and united Chino-Japanese Empire.

That the Ministry of Munitions should employ two million hands to make shells does not surprise us. But we do not understand why the clerical and administrative staff in Northumberland Avenue should number 13,500. Even now, we are informed that this staff is being added to at the rate of 200 or 300 clerks a week! The bureaucratic octopus is spreading its deadly tentacles over the land, and the cost of seven millions a day will soon be ten millions. It is said that only by this reckless expenditure on salaries and wages can the middle and lower classes be kept in good humour with the war. But the owners of accumulated capital are being steadily ruined, and a day of terrible reckoning will arrive.

Our ears are deafened by the insincere cant of the Press and of Ministers about democracy; but we hear nothing of our plain duty towards our Royal Allies, the King and Queen of Roumania, and the ex-Tsar of Russia, his wife and family. The King and Queen of Roumania were in the enjoyment of peace and security, and had they been wise would have imitated Holland and kept out of the war. They were dragged into the war by Russia and Great Britain, who now abandon them to their fate. They are hunted about from pillar to post, having lost their kingdom, and it is said that they think of taking refuge in Russia. God help them, if they trust themselves to the tender mercies of those revolutionaries, who will probably bundle them off to Siberia.

The King and Queen of Roumania have been betrayed by their Ministers, their Army, and their Allies. The least that Great Britain could do would be to offer them an asylum in this country. Are we indeed so powerless that we cannot protect those whom we have induced to enter the war? And what of the Tsar, whose armies swept into Galicia at the beginning of the war, and held the Austrian Army at a critical moment? We were lavish enough of our compliments to His Imperial Majesty in 1914 and 1915; and with incomparable baseness have transferred all our "soft sawder" to his destroyers. What are the crimes charged against the Tsar? Is not the evidence manufactured by anarchists and nihilists? That the Tsar is a weak, foolish, and obstinate man we can well believe. But if weak, foolish, and obstinate men are to be stripped of their rights and their property, and thrown into prison without trial, how many of our Ministers deserve to enjoy their liberty and their salaries? The callous indifference of the Entente Governments to the fate of the Sovereigns of Russia and Roumania is no feather in the cap of democracy.

THE ENCIRCLING POWER.

THE Kaiser is quaintly said, in an official German report, to have been visiting his fleet, not only at Wilhelmshaven and Heligoland, but in the North Sea. Possibly the All-Highest has ventured a short trip in a U-boat. If not, it is safe to say that he has seen no more of the water of the North Sea than would fill a slop-basin. But these gasconades, we suppose, put heart into the German people, maintaining that strong delusion under which it seems good to their bear-leaders that they should live.

Coupled with the small "scrap" which occurred the other day inside the Bight, however, the news cannot be altogether ignored. Hindenburg controls the German Navy as well as the Army, and it is always possible that, when every other hope fails—when it becomes evident that we are not to be brought to our knees by the intensified U-boat warfare, von Scheer may be ordered to sea on some desperate venture, as Villeneuve was by Napoleon or M. de Conflans by the Ministers of Louis XV. The incident in the Bight should make the public understand what is the present position of affairs in the North Sea. German mine-sweepers, protected by torpedo-craft, were attempting to clear a passage through our mine-field which is sown across the entrance to prevent the enemy getting out. Our light forces chased the enemy craft to the edge of the minefield laid by the Germans to prevent us getting in. It would thus seem as if we had departed from our old principle of naval strategy, which is to place no obstacle in the way of the enemy if he desires to put to sea, but to ensure that he shall be brought to action if he does so. It is a regrettable necessity, forced upon us by the enormous demands made upon our light craft, and especially our available force of destroyers, by the anti-submarine campaign. The only alternative is a resolute attempt to destroy German sea-power at its source.

There is, unquestionably, a wide-spread opinion, both in the Naval Service and outside, that this should be done. To give any reliable comparison of the naval forces of the Allies and of the Central Powers is impossible. But with all the great Sea Powers of the world now ranged against Germany, it is not wonderful that a feeling has arisen that a weapon of enormous potency for her defeat is not being used as strongly as it ought to be. That feeling is entirely justified, if we bear in mind the conditions under which alone sea-power can be effectively used, and upon whom lies the responsibility for the failure, hitherto, to create such conditions. The British Navy has not failed, and the professional chiefs who now command and control it have not failed. Within the ambit of the task allotted to them they have, on the contrary, succeeded brilliantly. To Sir John Jellicoe, in particular, the nation owes a debt of gratitude, the magnitude of which it will only come to understand when the hidden things of the past three years are revealed. While he was in command of the Grand Fleet, his strength of character withstood the counsels of rashness which, by a misreading of naval history, would have staked our all in a game of "Blind Hookey"; since he has been at the Admiralty, he has grappled with a dangerous situation which was not of his making with a success which few who knew the real state of affairs thought possible when he went there. He has had, and has still, to struggle with those whose understanding both of the potency and limitations of sea-power is very slight, and it can only be counted to him for righteousness that, hard fighter as he is by temperament, he has resisted, from first to last, the *vis consili expers*. He is as right to discourage aggressive action until the necessary weapons have been placed in his hand and a real prospect of decisive success opened before him as he would be wrong if he eschewed bold courses when these conditions have been created.

Let us try to arrive at a clear understanding of the

position. So long as the destruction of German sea-power is not made a primary object of the Allies' war-plans, so long are the allied navies restricted to the work they have done so doggedly and thoroughly in keeping communications open, strangling the over-sea trade of Germany, protecting the passage of our transports and supply ships, and warding off the deadly "blow at the heart." The difficulties encountered in the performance of these tasks, especially since the Germans were allowed to occupy and fortify the Belgian coast, are very little understood. But we are entitled to contend, and we do contend, without imputing the smallest blame to the naval chiefs, that the power locked up in the fleets of the Allies is far too great a proportion of their total war-power to be used merely for duties which are, in the main, defensive and protective. It is a true instinct, born of the sea-sense of a maritime people, which demands that our overwhelming preponderance at sea shall be used to force a quicker decision. We hope the American Government and people share this instinct, for they, like us, are of the sea. But let it be borne in mind that, if sea-power is to be used offensively, it must have the concentrated mind of those who direct the war behind it, and all the resources it may require, not in ships alone, but in troops and in aircraft also at its disposal. No mere naval bombardment is going to achieve the decisive end for which we look: namely, the clearing of German sea-power out of the way of a victorious prosecution of the war.

Maritime strategy is a thing not comprehended by the followers of Clausewitz and Jomini. The Continental strategists with whom we are working, and who, hitherto, have been dominant in our councils, are followers of these distinguished soldiers. There has not only been no concentration of the allied mind on the potentialities of sea-warfare, but there has been no co-ordination of naval strength. The disposition of the allied fleets has been unbalanced, lop-sided. To hold the sea-power of Germany and Austria in check, not to destroy it, has been considered a sufficient object. But this, though sufficient in the time of Napoleon, when the losses by enemy cruisers or privateers, though heavy, by no means threatened disaster, is insufficient in face of the submarine menace, which cannot be thoroughly controlled from the surface. If the surplus strength of the Allies is to be deployed against Germany, the submarine war must be controlled at its base, and its control is as much the affair of land-power as sea-power. Thus we are faced with the necessity to destroy German sea-power, and this can only be done by a concentration of will upon that object, which involves throwing all the resources of every kind which we can muster into its attainment. There are, or soon will be, ample forces of all kinds available. Where the blow should be struck, we will not attempt to indicate. That is for the strategists, naval and military, working on equal terms, to decide. We are only concerned to urge that the immense encircling power which we wield should be strongly used.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS REVISITED.

BY AN OLD MEMBER.

WHEN I left the House of Commons in 1802 the Irish members were talking. When I revisited it on Thursday, the 16th inst., an Irishman was on his legs, Sir Thomas Esmonde, and he was followed by another Irish member, Mr. Timothy Healy. Both these gentlemen were in the House with me in 1802, and very little changed in appearance, except that Mr. Healy has grown stout, and on his head and chin he wears "the silver livery of advised age." Quite like old times, I said to myself. I must be Rip Van Winkle, and have been asleep for a quarter of a century; and perhaps I am still a member. But on looking round the chamber I perceived a great change:

the House was hatless! I saw only three hats in a fairly full House: one covering (I suspect) the slumbering features of Mr. John O'Connor; one shading the Olympian brow of Sir Frederick Banbury; and one (a white one) sportingly cocked on the cranium of Sir William Byles. In my time everybody wore his hat, except some members of the Government, who had rooms behind the Chair. The hat was an almost necessary implement of Parliamentary warfare, for it was used to move for a return, to ask a question, to acknowledge a reply, or a personal allusion, to conceal one's emotion when attacked, and generally to shade one's eyes from the strong downward light. But those were the days of "toppers," and it was a never-failing joke to arrange that somebody should sit down on his hat. In these days of squash hats the jest would be a flat one indeed. I suppose that everybody leaves the soft hat downstairs in old Cove's lobby, Cove who was tipped a sovereign by most members at the end of the session, and left £40,000! Is it a lingering respect for "the House" that makes men leave their squash hats outside? Or is it that the modern excited head requires more air and freedom from pressure?

I was amused to watch exactly the same scenic preparations for the speeches of the great actors that used to precede a duel between Gladstone and Goschen or Hicks-Beach. A Whip had moved the adjournment at the morning sitting, and it was known that the Prime Minister would speak about four o'clock. The bores and groundlings droned on till about ten minutes to four, when Mr. Astor, one of the private secretaries, took his seat behind the Treasury bench, Mr. Bonar Law appeared beside the Speaker's Chair, members began to drop in, and the Speaker called Mr. Kennedy Jones. Almost at the same time, Mr. Lloyd George, followed by Mr. Balfour and Mr. Churchill, entered from behind the Chair on the right (down stage right centre), and Mr. Asquith entered from the opposite side (left centre down stage). Evidently the play was about to begin.

A "bonnet" is invariably requisitioned to speak a kind of prologue, so that the House may fill. But of all the bonnets I ever heard put up to prepare the way for the Prime Minister, Mr. Kennedy Jones was certainly the queerest. A strong nasal accent, somehow different from the Yankee twang, a frequent stutter (clearly not the effect of nervousness), a muffled enunciation, and a string of commonplace questions, obviously arranged with the Prime Minister beforehand, made a strange and unpleasant effect. Yet this performance was hailed by the whole Press as "the best first speech that ever yet was made," and was given a whole column's report in the *Times*. How deep and subtle and all-pervading is the corruption of the Press! Mr. Kennedy Jones was one of the Harmsworth young men: founded the *Daily Mail* and *Mirror*: was editor of the *Evening News*: is a millionaire, etc. There was a time when success in the House of Commons depended on other things. The Prime Minister was calm and easy; toyed with his glasses: read his statistics deliberately in his soft Welsh voice, throwing back from time to time the long grey locks, which Archbishops and Premiers train so carefully. This man, indeed, has changed in his march "up to power's meridian height." I thought of him as the shy youth, with a scared look in his gazelle-like eyes, eating a poached egg in the dining-room at tea-time. Mr. Asquith followed, and he too has changed. The keen hawk-like look and combative manner of the practising barrister have been replaced by a somnolent and rubicund visage, the corners of the mobile mouth drooping rather pathetically. It is clear that Mr. Asquith intends to bid against Mr. Lloyd George for the Trade Unionist vote, but just at the moment his drowsy dithyramb on Labour failed to touch the House.

Another change, due to the time through which we are dragging, is the disappearance of party seats.

Conservatives, Liberals and Labour members are scattered anyhow over the House, so that a cheer or an interjection may issue from behind or before a Minister, to his left or to his right. This fusion or confusion of parties, and the common bond of the war, spread a general air of friendliness and forbearance throughout the House, very different from the fierce animosities of the first Home Rule bills. The Irish Nationalists alone retain their seats below the gangway on the Opposition side; but they are very depressed nowadays, greeting with a sickly grin Mr. Healy's saying that the "Sinn Feiners are the only honest politicians."

On the whole, the House of Commons has changed less in a quarter of a century than the outside world. Thackeray has propounded a metaphysical theory that nothing really changes in the world except the spectator. The rouged cheeks and blackened eyes of the ladies of the ballet, which now glare so dismally across the footlights at you and me, are the same charms which thirty years ago made our pulses gallop and caused us to feel for the money in our pockets. They are the same: 'tis you and I have changed. Perhaps that was the reason why, as I slipped out of the House, and along the familiar lobbies, I said to myself, the age of great parliamentarians is gone.

THE BALANCE OF THE BALTIC.

THAT eminent pacifist, General Bernhardt, used to declare that when the great war came Scandinavia would feed Germany. And so it has happened. Scandinavia, including Denmark, and Holland together have supplied Germany with fats; fish; various imported commodities like coffee, cotton and tobacco; and steel and a certain amount of other metals like copper. These are facts; but we are on more delicate ground when we touch on political sympathies and tendencies.

In all these countries we see a division of sympathy—least of all, however, in Norway, whose people, as they have always been, are staunch friends of England. Even here, however, the menace of Germany and her commercial influence have wrung certain succours out of a country, which has suffered more than any other neutral from the brutality of German sea warfare. In Sweden we may be excused if we have noted in the Government and Army pro-German influences. These influences are strengthened by the national hostility to Russia and by the grip which Germany has upon Swedish industries. Thus, for example, Swedish steel, more important to war even than to civilisation, is under German control. The Swedes are the trolls who raise and smelt the ore which is used by their industrial masters, the Germans. It is an unhappy position for a country to be exploited by a foreign Power, and we suggest to Sweden as a national ideal to obtain control over its own raw materials, and so found its economic independence on the only sound foundation. On the other hand, the people of Sweden fear and dislike the Germans, have a sentimental attachment to their old allies, the French, and a long historical memory. The Prussian attitude to Swedish independence—whether in commerce or in politics—has always been marked by an egotism and brutality which a self-respecting people like the Swede are not likely to forget. Moreover, the Swedes have suffered for the attitude of their Government. They have been brought near to famine and they know where the responsibility lies. Their Government, whether through fear or favour, has followed a course so friendly to Germany as to bring it at times into rather sharp conflict with the Allies. And the Swedes, who have suffered thereby, blamed their Government. The popular party, led by M. Branting, is a revolt in favour of national independence, and especially for an attitude of more self-respect and aloofness where Germany is concerned. For the Swedish people feel instinctively that if Germany wins this

war their freedom and the freedom of the Baltic are alike in the greatest danger.

As to Denmark, it is a sad story. The Swedes and Norwegians in the last resort can defend themselves: the Danes are strong only in memory. They were once a nation; but their independence was lost with their two provinces. They are helpless to defend themselves. Copenhagen is crowded with Prussians, who behave exactly as if they owned the town and the country. Moreover, the Danish Foreign Office—how shall we put it without suspicion of offence!—is more than reconciled to the position. Danish commerce was never particularly robust in its national sentiment, depends greatly on German capital, and has no rooted objection to what is known as war-profiteering. Denmark, in short, in spite of the inarticulate and helpless loathing of its people, has become practically an annexe of Germany, and why, being in that position, it should have obtained such favours from our Foreign Office, is one of the several points in the policy of that Department which no one can understand.

From this little review it will be seen that the balance of the Baltic is not quite as even as might be wished. The scale of freedom, in fact, strikes the beam, and the German side rests on the ground. How can it be restored?

Much, it will be seen, depends on Russia. If Russia were to rise like the phoenix from her revolutionary ashes, and emerge as a great, free and united nation, she might form a Baltic league to maintain the freedom of that sea. But for the moment no one can predict that this is going to happen. It may, and we hope it will. But there are obvious disintegrating influences which must make the Scandinavians rather doubtful of any immediate prospect of leadership from that direction.

Yet the freedom of the Baltic is vital to Russia: if that doorway and the door of Constantinople are alike closed to her, this great giant, so nearly liberated, is doomed for ever to "snort in the Seven Sleepers' Den." She must fall back into an economic servitude to the great neighbour which has always exploited her, and must confess her inability to create out of Slavdom a great and independent Power. Such is the choice before Russia to-day—a choice which may be beyond human volition, and may depend rather on the ungovernable forces of Destiny.

But is there any other nation which might help towards a League of those little Baltic nations. It may seem preposterous to mention Poland, for Poland at present seems to lie prostrate in the grip of the Central Powers. Yet the ancient Poland was a strong kingdom, with a window in the Baltic in the shape of Danzig, and a warlike and numerous population with great natural resources behind. The Poles are now tributary to three Empires, and are being ground to dust between them. Yet they seem to be a people tenacious of life and strong in their national instincts. Their numbers may be variously estimated. They have been put as high as forty million; but at the lowest computation their numbers are sufficient to make them a power—if they were united and independent. Their independence would obviously be a factor in creating a new balance to take the place of the balance which has been destroyed. But one condition is essential. Any conception of a national Poland which does not include her old Baltic port is a sham and a mockery.

In the meantime, the balance of the Baltic must remain a British interest. All through British history we have fought at intervals for the freedom of the Sound. To that end we have usually been deep in Scandinavian policy, and have waged wars and fought battles. The reason is obvious, a nation with a great woollen manufacture must always be interested in the Northern markets, a nation which produces coal must always look to cold climates for a market, and a nation which uses pit props must always think of the pine forests of the North. It might be added that a Democracy is unhappy without the wood-pulp which here takes the place of opium pills in Hindustan.

For all these reasons we cannot cease, however much we may desire, to take an interest in the Baltic. There was a time when we followed a sound and intelligent Baltic policy. We abandoned it when we left Denmark to her fate. In the present war we have shown little signs of consecutive thought on the subject, although our Norwegian Minister is reported to be the best man in our diplomatic service. It is about time that our War Cabinet really set itself to think on this subject.

THE BATTLE OF THE SINKING FUND.

THE greater part of the National Debt as it stood after Waterloo had been incurred in our fight for security against Napoleon. The expenditure helped to obtain 100 years of prosperity arising out of victory, and a peace scarcely ruffled by the Crimean and South African Wars. In considering schemes for the repayment of the debt incurred during the present war we must allow for the probability of victory and peace bringing similar blessings for a similar period. In that case, repayment should be spread over 100 years, during which the three generations to follow us would help to pay part of the cost of the benefits in which they will share. The burden of repayment ought not to be thrown on us and our children only. If thrown on us and them our trade will be injured and our power of financial recovery reduced. Repayment, in whatever form, can only be effected by the taxation of trade. "Be sure," says Lord Morley of Blackburn, "that the burden of taxation, however spread, however dispersed, ultimately falls on the shoulders of the industrial community." Yet the Government obscurely proposes to raise by taxation an annual sum, in addition to interest, of, roughly, £50,000,000 to extinguish the 5 Per Cent. War Loan by a Sinking Fund on a 5 per cent. basis spread over the short period of forty-three years. The 5 per cent. cumulative basis will in any case be difficult to make operative. But on that basis the amount needed to extinguish the debt in forty-three years is over £50,000,000 annually, whereas if the period be 100 years the amount needed to extinguish an eventual National Debt of, say, £6,000,000,000 will be a mere bagatelle—£2,500,000 annually. Think of the difference of strain on the country's finances. Such is the magical effect of compound interest on annual additions and cumulations over a long period. The repayment in 43 years means twenty times the strain compared with 100 years allowed for repayment. An annual payment of £1 accumulated and at 5 per cent. p.a. compound interest amounts in 100 years to £2,610. In 40 years it only amounts to £120. Industry and commerce will suffer severely if so large an annual sum as £50,000,000 be taken by hurried taxation for the Sinking Fund. The wage fund will be reduced, causing the usual repercussions injurious to our working people. Most investors repaid by Sinking Funds raised by taxation will reinvest in Trustee Stocks, and not in trade. Trade, which will provide the Sinking Funds, must then replenish its liquid assets by borrowing. Results: dearer money, dearer cost of production of goods for competitive export sale, higher costs of living. Raise the general rate of interest on money and you lower the market value of Government Stocks. We need to keep the market quotations of Government Stocks as high as possible, so that the State may in 1929 convert its debt to as low a rate of interest as possible. Taxation after 1929 will be materially lightened if the National Debt interest then be at the rate of 4 per cent. in place of 5 per cent. Abundant capital at cheap rates is the greatest blessing to every working man and every trader. The State must not deplete the supply to please writers of text-books.

Another and legitimate method of extinguishing the National Debt would be to offer in 1929 about £2

more stock to each holder of £100 5 Per Cent. War Loan, and, in return for an annual payment of interest at the rate of 4 per cent. guaranteed for 100 years, the £102 capital would, by agreement, be extinguished at the end of that period. £2 accumulated at 4 per cent. p.a. compound interest amounts roughly to £100 in 100 years. In other words: the £2 of additional capital stock, yielding 4 per cent. interest annually for 100 years would, by compound interest, at the end of that same period, repay to the lender almost in full each £100 he had originally lent to the Government. This is an unwise but actuarially sound terminable annuity scheme. Gradually the market value of the annuity would fall, and the State could buy back its debt at ever-decreasing prices. But to allow holders of the National Debt to witness their capital thus wasting to nothing would be demoralising and against public policy. Trust and family funds could not be invested in terminable annuities without the entire principle of property being revised. To invest thus would entail a complete redistribution of private wealth and of stored private effort and the disappearance of endowments of public institutions. On the whole, the best method for extinguishing the debt seems to be by a combination of sinking fund and terminable annuity known as the "A" and "B" Annuities Scheme of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. The "A" Annuities yield income for a certain number of years and then become extinguished; the "B" Annuities yield income for a certain number of years and then repay capital to the lender by having retained for that purpose a portion of the annual income and accumulated it at compound interest over that same period. The length of the period is the pivot of any scheme for repayment. The Germans will have to contemplate an overwhelming load of taxation for interest on war loans, apart from sinking funds. This will, for reasons already given, paralyse their export trade and make the life of the German wage earner almost impossible. He will attempt to escape by emigration. Germany will probably either openly by conversion, or by means of some confidence trick, try to repudiate a part of her domestic war debt. She will seek to scale down the rate of interest she has contracted to pay, either by reducing the interest before it is paid or by juggling back a good part of it out of the hand of the recipient immediately he receives it. It will make Germans in future shy of lending to their Government. The British fighting man is unhesitatingly backed up by the savings of the British poor and the British rich. The confidence felt by the world in the unswerving honesty of Britain towards those who lend her their money has always been one of our greatest assets in time of trouble. A warning should be sounded against countenancing the efforts of any modern Cobbett who may once again mislead the unthinking by schemes for tampering with the National Debt in relation to interest or repayment. Although the worthlessness of that mischief-maker's advice has by now been exposed in countless matters, Cobbett's voice was the most powerful in England outside Parliament after the Napoleonic Wars. In 1823 he publicly advocated various dishonest and wrong-headed "adjustments" of the Public Debt and debts between man and man. Had his advice been adopted it would have cost us dear during the past three years, when finance and the willing tender of loans to the Government have been of such importance. Our forefathers set us an example by keeping rigid faith with the public creditor. We have reaped their reward in two ways: in peace times the State and public authorities have with ease and at cheap rates borrowed money with which to improve the public services in every city, town, and village; in war we have with ease raised stupendous sums. Let the Germans tinker with the interest on their war loans and juggle with their creditors. Let the champions of Sinking Funds fight out schemes of repayment with the partisans of terminable annuities. But let us prevent any person advocating anything which might cause holders of British Government Loans to

think that a change is to be made in the character or yield of their security or in the conditions under which they bargained to lend their money to the State. Our forefathers long ago learnt that one of the secrets of national safety, and of statesmanship, lies in the maintenance, at all risks, and at all costs, of transparent good faith between the Exchequer and the public creditor. Directly any Cobbett-like National Debt schemes raise their heads they must be dropped on with a sledge-hammer.

Since war broke out the Ministry of Munitions and the housewife have experienced the effects of stoppage of essential supplies heretofore obtained from overseas. Victorian economists ignored the possibility of war and, in their academic craze for cheapness, to make Britain a clearing-house, maimed Britain's power of production. A present-day text-book writer on economics ignores a vital factor once again. To advocate hurried payment of war debt by means of taxation is to ignore the withering effect upon industrial recovery. Bacon observes in his essay on Expense that in clearing a man's estate (of expense) he may do himself as much hurt in being too sudden as in letting it (the debt) run on too long. Industry cannot without costly borrowings find the cash with which to buy raw material and pay wages for manufacturing if the State is "too sudden" in taxation for quick repayment of war expense. Our policy of debt repayment ought not to be guided by academic economists. Years of active personal experience in a great manufacturing concern might entitle the opinions of text-book writers and lecturers to respect. Without such experience their opinions are drawn from a stagnant cistern of second-hand information and, if adopted, are likely to hurt the whole nation.

INTERNATIONALISM.

THE whole drift of mood and will accompanying the Stockholm Conference episode deserves much closer attention than it has yet received. Whether some Socialist-"democrats" are suffered to attend a polyglot Council with a view not only to the manipulation of peace but to its enlistment in the cause of internationalism may not seem a matter of immense moment. The would-be conspirators against country as country are comparatively insignificant; they represent no genuinely large following in any of the allied nations except in upheaved and dislocated Russia, and even in Russia most divergently and, it may be hoped, most transiently. But they do stand for an undercurrent that if allowed to flow unstemmed or undiverted might one day overwhelm the breakwaters of order—for an undercurrent which may gain impetus from Governments that even while they dread its possible devastations nurse a bias in favour of abstract doctrines delusively and vaguely trumpeted forth as "democratic." In this country this New Democracy rests on the force of a Socialism that has been allowed to overlay the now pampered and politicised Trade Unions. In France and Italy, too, it rests on the aspirations of secret societies that seek to disrupt society under the name of Socialism and internationalise Europe under the wing of the War. Everything everywhere is to be "nationalised" except the nation, and the nationalism is only to serve as a stepping-stone to a sort of international exhibition—a league (which is, of course, to prove a "brotherhood") of "States." The "People" is to rule everyone but itself. And when we are profane enough to inquire what the "People" is, it is always some other people that start into notoriety as dictators and misrepresenters. The whole prospect is glossed over by the "Grand Philanthropy" of those who claim to be "the sole purveyors of the milk of human kindness," a philanthropy unlimited as the "democracy" it would erect, and so tender that with the people it would share, as was once wittily remarked, the People's last crust.

Mr. Ellis Griffith, the other day in the House of Commons, aptly scathed the double-dealing of these pretensions. He asked who were some of these "leaders" of Labour that fastened their own interested theories on the average working man. And he declared, without contradiction, that Messieurs Snowden and MacDonald, at any rate, were not working-men at all, and that the hearts of most hand-workers do not harbour Socialism or any other particular "ism" whatever. The working-man is for the most part practical. Rightly, he desires and requires a real betterment of conditions and a feasible adjustment between capital and labour: he claims, too, for his toil a proper dignity and security. But, save for the hotheads who eagerly catch at a syndicalism which the Kaiser sedulously and insidiously propagates, they have no desire for the extinction of capital—or, rather, for its absorption by the "State," which is usually the worst capitalist in the world. They repudiate a syndicalism which, sheltered by the Grand Philanthropy, would plunge Europe into increasing and internecine discord. And they mistrust the politicians who may make their account out of it. In a word, they are human beings who understand human nature. They know that the men who love all mankind with a devotion that ignores their neighbour have axes to grind whether of doctrine or domination. If lucre be dross, why, they ask, are offices so remunerative? If the universe must be undone that a theory may prevail, they do not quite see where they eventually come in. Unctuous flatteries and imperious interferences leave them cold and suspicious. They dislike this Grand Philanthropy.

To return to the Stockholm imbroglio. The first source of the muddle seems to have escaped notice. If we mistake not, it was the Premier himself who invited, or sanctioned the invitation of, the Russian delegates to this country. Those Russian delegates cannot be said to have been emissaries of what is trying to be the Russian Government. Mr. Henderson knows this to his cost: he has had to pay their expenses. We believe that we certainly do not overstate facts when we say that if they are the emissaries of anything, they are the emissaries of international Socialism—of the "idealist" Soviet. It is not surprising, therefore, that international Socialists in this country should seek to profit by the occasion, but it is unfortunate that our susceptible Prime Minister did not apparently make searching inquiries before these gentlemen left Russia. M. Kerensky is a Socialist, but he is a nationalist also. At first he seems to have fancied that the Stockholm affair would not hurt. But stern events are rapidly teaching him wisdom. He changed his mind under the formula that the decisions of such a Conference must not bind his now Coalitionised Administration. Directly he had changed his mind, our Premier changed his, and the internationalisers are in a fair way to be foiled. But what inevitably arises in the mind is how can it possibly avail for Governments to permit an irresponsible gathering of international interlopers at such a vital and crucial hour? The case is not even on a par with the vogue of a perpetual reference of crises to conventions and committees, for these, however politically packed, are supposed to have at least some validity of advice. Here, however, futility is admitted in advance, and indispensable ships were to be used and precious time to be wasted in conveying babblers to their bogus Parliament. An uneasy suspicion is aroused that, after all, perhaps a Government or two might eventually pay some heed to the decisions, if any, of these amateurs who are still seeking to erect their stucco tower of Babel. It will not be the Governments of France or of Italy, of that we may be sure. As for Russia, her work is cut out to preserve any effective form of Government at all in the chaos which these delegates partly typify. It is devoutly to be hoped that no side-politics of the Grand Philanthropy will be allowed to

sway our own Government at any time and under any pretext whatsoever. The new-fangled dogma of "Mandate" must never be allowed to override the rational purpose. We know from the solemn farce of the Leeds Conference how enormous majorities can be manœuvred. We know that the Socialists themselves are on this point—in all its bearings—most keenly divided. We know that the majority of the proletariat, comprising its best and choicest, are dead against such tomfoolery. It is the theorists, the exploiters, the paid agitators, the ambitious nobodies, who hope to convert such a moment into a factious and fictitious inter-European "solidarity." And why, it must be asked, should Great Britain with all her glorious continuity take any leaf out of any soiled and second-hand volume that the Russia of the moment may be selling off at an immense reduction? Russia owes everything to the Allies, and the least that she can do in her deplorable misfortunes is to recognise that debt by not intermeddling with their domestic concerns. Great Britain took no leaf out of her book of mediævalism. Why should she now take even a fly-leaf out of her book of Jacobinism by establishment? It is below dignity and above measure. It is absurd and abominable. Is Russia to "reconstruct" England?

We are now being constantly assured that we are fighting for "Democracy." We are not, as every real fighter at home and abroad knows deeply and bitterly. The hollow voice and short sight of this "Democracy" plunged us into a conflict which is one of patriotism and honour, not of abstracts or experiments. We are in danger of taking "the whispers of a cabal for the voice of the people." So much for the Grand Philanthropy.

SWITZERLAND AND THE WAR.

ANY reference to the attitude of Switzerland towards the war from which, thanks partly to circumstance, and partly to design, it has so far held aloof, should be qualified by an understanding of the Swiss as not a single nation, but rather three nations under one Government. Strictly speaking, one might as reasonably define the attitude of the Balkans.

Technically speaking, the whole of Switzerland is neutral. This is a matter of policy, since her economic existence depends on keeping out of the quarrels of her neighbours, on whom, remote from the sea and lacking mineral resources, she depends for her vital needs. It is, indeed, no exaggeration to say that she could within a month be brought to the verge of ruin by either the Entente or the Central Powers. In these circumstances, Switzerland has to be all things to all men; and, so long as she maintains a perfectly correct neutrality in the letter, both belligerent groups have hitherto exacted no more than a moderate neutrality in the spirit.

Taken, as a whole, Switzerland's attitude falls under two heads:—

- (1) A genuine horror in the abstract and a generous impulse to help the sufferers.
- (2) A resentment of any and every inconvenience—the total lack of some articles and the rising price of others—entailed by the state of war on her frontiers.

The worst which can be said of Swiss neutrality is that the nation makes a virtue of necessity, forgetting that a population less than that of London must needs forego the dubious luxury of war, and that it exists solely by favour of its neighbours. The least attractive aspect of Swiss neutrality is the practical spirit in which the capitalist is playing the honest broker, making fortunes out of both sides, reviving old industries that, before the war, were moribund, establishing new, always at the expense of neighbours too busy cutting each other's throat to keep their shops open. Commercially speaking, even this attitude is beyond

reproach, though it inevitably suggests the case of a weakling picking the pockets of two giants who have thrown off their coats to fight.

The selfish standpoint from which the Swiss view every development of the war only as it affects their own interests is also merely human, but here, again, a dyspeptic critic might take exception to the mood in which they contemplate earth-shaking tragedies. Belgium may burn, France may be ravished, Serbia reduced to a wilderness, Armenia depopulated, but—will there be enough coal next winter? shall we have any potatoes? will the Federal Council order meatless days, sugar-cards, or other restrictions which combine national economy with private discomfort? Even when, as legitimate provision against a rapid and not too costly invasion of Alsace, the Germans recently threw several new bridges over the Rhine in the vicinity of Istein, a few miles from the Swiss frontier, the papers were filled with indignation against these new obstructions to the free navigation of that river. What right, they asked, had Germany to save a few paltry divisions by thus thwarting the cherished scheme of making Bâle a North Sea port!

Switzerland, then, has a uniform attitude towards the war only where her interests are either served or threatened. In all else, the burghers of neighbouring cantons are as little in accord as the subjects of neighbouring empires. Those who have only the superficial acquaintance with Switzerland acquired as tourists will probably assume that the population of the French and Italian cantons are wholly pro-Entente, and the inhabitants of the German-Swiss cities and districts equally pro-German; but such an estimate would unduly favour the Central Empires, since, even in a city like Bâle, and in a canton like Aargau, there is a very strong anti-German element to be reckoned with.

That Bâle is predominantly sympathetic to Germany is not to be denied, and a story is told, equally illustrative of the attitude of the Bâlois and of that of the Austrians, according to which a Viennese lady, having come to that city to visit an old schoolfellow, packed her trunks long before she had outstayed her welcome, and said:—

"Ah, non, mon amie! Votre Bâle est beaucoup trop Boche pour moi. Je vais à Genève!"

What other result, indeed, could be expected? There are at Bâle no fewer than thirty-five thousand Germans out of a total population of little more than four times that number. For generations, the Bâlois, rich and poor, have had intimate business relations with Germany, and have intermarried with Germans. Their language is a dialect based on "high German," and easily acquired by anyone familiar with that tongue. Their law, finance and education follow German models. Their regiments march past the saluting base with a goose step. Yet, not only is almost the entire working-class against Germany, but even a considerable number of their employers, though these do not necessarily proclaim their sympathy from the housetops of a city that teams with German spies, and that is not even included within the first line of the Swiss defences. In Aargau, which looks at Baden across the Rhine, the peasants detest their arrogant neighbours, and, being less guarded in their talk than the townfolk, openly hope for their defeat.

Neutrality, at any rate in the letter, is for Switzerland at once a necessity and an obligation, and it must be confessed that it is rarely that anyone of weight in the national councils disregards it. Indeed, one of the most sensational episodes in the history of neutrals during the war was the indiscretion of Herr Hoffmann, a respected member of the Federal Council, who, giving free rein to his pro-German sympathies, sent a telegram to Grimm, the Swiss peace-delegate at Petrograd, in which he set forth the terms on which the Central Empires would be prepared to conclude a

separate peace with Russia. This telegram which deserves a place with some of those despatched by Hoffmann's master at Berlin, cost him his place. But Hoffmann is not Switzerland, and, in fact, a wave of indignation at his amazing impropriety swept over the country, some of his bitterest critics being found among the German-Swiss themselves.

On the whole, then, though absolute neutrality is an attitude impossible to average intelligence, the Swiss maintain correct relations with their neighbours, and, apart from occasional blackmail on the part of Berlin, their neighbours have hitherto treated them accordingly. They are sound patriots, and, unless not wholly unforeseen complications should arise, they will defend their frontiers with equal determination against any and every invader. Pending the need of such serious operations, they are meanwhile keeping their troops in efficient force on the Rhine and in the Jura, and suppressing the traffic in contraband to which hungry Germans tempt needy Swiss. If the Swiss are careful not to depart from this attitude till the coming of peace, they need have no fear for the future, for their beautiful land will once more be the playground of the world, and their commerce will flourish as at no time since they became a nation.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WHAT A VICE-ADMIRAL WOULD DO WITH US.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The Sussex Club, Eastbourne.

22 August 1917.

SIR,—After reading your article in the SATURDAY REVIEW of the 18 August, under the heading, "Will the Navy Act?" I beg to inform you that, in my opinion, the article is not only most misleading in facts, but assists in undermining the discipline and confidence of the Naval Service and country in our leaders.

Should it be my fortune to be employed by Admirals Jellicoe or Sturdee on a court-martial to try you on these charges, I should have no hesitation in condemning you to be shot. And as you appeal to Admirals Lord Nelson, Lord Hawke, Rodney, Duncan, and also Calder and Byng, I am equally sure that these distinguished admirals would not only confirm your being shot, but, in keeping with the severer discipline of the day, would have you publicly flogged before shooting.

Yours truly,

C. H. H. MOORE,
Vice-Admiral.

[Our first shock of alarm was calmed by the reflection that Vice-Admiral Moore has long retired from the Navy. He belongs to the "on-your-knee-you-dog-three-hundred-lashes" school, happily as extinct in the Navy of to-day as the Dodo.—Ed. S.R.]

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE NEAR EAST.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

S. Petroc Minor, St. Issey.

19 August 1917.

SIR,—There is one aspect of the Russian *débacle* which, so far as I have seen, has escaped notice in the public Press. Will you allow me, as a student of Near Eastern politics and an old traveller in those countries, to put it plainly, for it is time that we faced the difficulties which will be presented to us after the war. Labour Conferences may give us phrases, but phrases do not ultimately govern the world; they may provide us with policies, but they cannot alter facts. The old

governing classes in England have largely renounced their responsibilities and abdicated their power, but it is certain that in the end it is to the educated that a nation will turn for advice and government.

Let us assume that we emerge victorious, that the Germans are cleared out of Belgium, that Alsace and Lorraine are restored to France, that the enemy is driven back to the Rhine and that all his schemes of domination in the West are shattered. That Germany should be utterly crushed and over seventy millions of a clever, stubborn and disciplined race reduced to impotence is hardly conceivable. Now the war, whatever Germany may say, was certainly a war for expansion. It was, moreover, a war aimed primarily at England and Russia, the two countries which stood in her way, and, this being the case, the control of England from the coasts of the Channel—a disaster from which we have escaped by the skin of our teeth—was only part of her aim, there remains the expansion to the East, that is, through the Near East to the Persian Gulf. Dammed up in the West, the Teutonic flood will beat with ever-increasing force on the East; what barriers do we propose to construct? The Balkans are a seething mass of conflicting races, which, from that very circumstance, have furnished the name for a popular dish of fruits. Hitherto Russia, as the great Slav empire, has championed the Slav elements against Teutonic aggression; the immediate cause of the Great War was her defence of Serbia against German ruthlessness. We certainly began the war under the impression that our great Eastern ally would police the Balkans at its close, and incidentally block the communications of Germany with Constantinople. Who is to do that now? Ape the Western Allies to keep a permanent army in Salonika? Supposing Constantinople is "neutralised," where are the army and the fleet to come from that will defend the neutrality of that great city, incomparably placed for political domination, the richest prize a plundering horde could wish for? Who is to govern the Holy Land? President Wilson, from New York? What about Armenia when the Russian armies are withdrawn in obedience to the new policy of her Socialistic rulers? England went mad in 1908 over the glorious Turkish revolution, but after the deposition of "Abdul the Damned" and the usual talk about Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, Enver and his "Committee of Union and Progress" soon turned from embracing Christians to cutting their throats and knocking them on the head as heartily as ever. If "scraps of paper" without gunt do not bind Germans, they certainly will not bind Turks; we have had abundant evidence of this ever since the Crimean War.

Let us go a little further east. With the Russian withdrawal our position in Mesopotamia is, to put it mildly, not improved. Are we to keep a permanent army of occupation in Bagdad? For the Turks with all their faults, are fine fighting fellows, and will not sit down quietly to see us in the city of the Caliphs. And what about Persia? I have been four times in that country and in that now all-important north-western corner; I think I may venture to claim that I am one of, let us say, a dozen or twenty Englishmen who have first-hand knowledge of Kurdistan, so I may speak with some assurance. The government of Persia, as I knew it, was not by any means ideal, but it performed the first function of government, it at least preserved law and order. In 1906 "representative institutions" were introduced, a system of government hopeless and ridiculous to all who knew anything of Persia and its people. In 1909 we supported the Persian revolution, (what has made Englishmen of the twentieth century so enamoured of revolutions?) Since then there has been no government worth the name in that unhappy country and England and Russia have had to divide it into "spheres" to maintain some kind of order, with the assistance of a *gendarmierie* under Swedish officers, not, as the war has proved, a very happy selection. What is to happen now? Are we to "take on" the whole of Persia with the Turks and Kurds on our flank and with possible

anarchy in Russian Transcaucasia to the north of the Araxes? What force must we keep in Tabriz, to name one place alone?

Here are some of the problems raised by what the Prime Minister calls the "beneficent Russian Revolution." Let us turn from the benefits in Russia to what vitally concerns ourselves. I have tried to propound the questions which the "no annexations" policy of the Russian Socialists presents to us. Perhaps wiser heads than mine will answer them.

Yours truly,

ATHELSTAN RILEY.

WOMEN AND WAR.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Dundee.

20 August 1917.

SIR,—The historic retrospect, piquant and picturesque, of feminine-cum-masculine dudes, fops, and nuts in your issue of 11 August, by a lady, is *éblouissant*, but it is not convincing. It is incomplete without Byron in stays on a horse in Hyde Park. Disraeli, too, the Victorian dandy, must not be omitted. His curly raven locks, his velveteen coat, his Oriental jewellery, and his patrician hauteur were as valuable an asset for notoriety as the Stockholm Conference, stifled at birth, is to Mr. R. MacDonald. One of Thackeray's "Four Georges" deserves a niche in any Pantheon of fashion. He had no less than twenty waistcoats in colours as brilliant and as variegated as the coat of Joseph, that was the *chef-d'œuvre* of the Egyptian tailor.

Women all, with few exceptions—from the Queen of Sheba and Cleopatra, from Sarah Bernhardt to Mary Anderson and Mrs. Asquith—praise, adore, and worship silks, satins, Brussels lace, and that indescribable lingerie that is only understood of the feminine mind. It may not be in harmony with the ethics of the age of chivalry, but Ruskin endorses in emphatic terms your excellent editorial of the 11th inst. on women and the war. He writes in "The Crown of Wild Olive":

"I, for one, would fain join in the cadence of hammer-strokes that should beat swords into ploughshares; and that this cannot be, is not the fault of us men. It is your fault. Wholly yours. Only by your command, or by your permission, can any contest take place amongst us.

"And the real final reason for the poverty, misery, and rage of battle throughout Europe, is simply that you women, however good, however religious, however self-sacrificing for those whom you love, are too selfish and too thoughtless to take pains for any creature out of your own immediate circles. You fancy that you are sorry for the pain of others. Now I tell you just this, that if the usual course of war, instead of unroofing peasants' houses, and ravaging peasants' fields, merely broke the china upon your own drawing-room tables, no war in civilised countries would last a week.

"I tell you more, that at whatever moment you chose to put a period to war, you could do it with less trouble than you take any day to go out to dinner. You know, or at least you might know, if you would think, that every battle you hear of has made many widows and orphans. We have, none of us, heart enough truly to mourn with these. But at least we might put on the outer symbols of mourning with them. Let but every Christian lady who has conscience toward God, vow that she will mourn, at least outwardly, for His killed creatures. Your praying is useless, and your church-going mere mockery of God, if you have not plain obedience in you enough for this. Let every lady in the upper classes of civilised Europe simply vow that while any cruel war proceeds she will wear black: a mute's black: with no jewel, no ornament, no excuse for, or evasion into prettiness. I tell you again, no war would last a week."

Words of wisdom and of truth resound in unbelieving ears in the twentieth century, as reverberated, as a warning, the hammer-strokes on Noah's Ark about two thousand years ago.

I am, etc.,

THOMAS OGILVY.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING CONSERVATIVE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.
Glendora, Hindhead, Surrey.

20 August 1917.

SIR,—The plight of the Conservative Party in these islands before and since the war began—to which pointed allusion is made in the current SATURDAY REVIEW—is surely simple enough in its origin.

From sheer laziness and good temper, it allowed control to pass, for nearly twenty years, into the hands of a politician who first came into notoriety as the Republican Mayor of Birmingham.

A magnificent parliamentary majority, which had gushed forth like a fountain from the patriotic unity of our people, and swelled by the mistakes of political opponents, was frittered away under the depressing influence of a long sequence of hybrid nostrums from the Birmingham brew, all equally unsuccessful, capped by the effort of their author to put them into oblivion and secure support by the revival of a cry which our great and successful leader, Lord Beaconsfield, had told us, years before, with characteristic emphasis, was not only dead, but damned.

The future success of the Conservative Party will be equally simple. It will accrue in ratio to the appreciation and adoption of Conservative policy. What this is, a re-perusal of Lord Beaconsfield's speeches may afford some useful indication.

Your obedient servant,

J. LANDFEAR LUCAS.

A STORY FROM THE SEA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Hill Lodge, Warminster.

18 August, 1917.

SIR,—I am a regular reader of your REVIEW, and greatly enjoy the provision you give us; but I regret the "true story from the sea" (p. 1, SATURDAY REVIEW, 11 August). The hymn beginning "O" (not "Oh," as in your paragraph) "happy band," etc., is no favourite of mine, but still it is a translation of a ninth-century hymn, by no less a man than J. M. Neale, and has, no doubt, sacred associations with many. It is so easy to raise a laugh by the sudden transposition of the sacred to the secular that in this age of irreverence this is to help "the enemy." The incident from the sea need not have had the wide circulation of "the SATURDAY," and the laugh in many clubs and reading-rooms will recur to some minds in church, it may be feared.

Yours faithfully,

H. R. WHYTEHEAD.

THE COURAGE OF THE ENGLISH.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Flatford, East Bercholt, Suffolk.

19 August 1917.

SIR,—Allowing "Economist's" estimate of a post-war debt of some six thousand millions, its mere citation does not prove that a Corn Production Bill, a huge national housing scheme, and an increased expenditure on national education at the present time are uneconomic.

To firstly make sure of our food, then to develop and preserve physical fitness for our greater tasks, and finally

to make better use of human knowledge look like evidences that the English are exercising wise forethought.

Need we doubt that our race will continue to exercise its hereditary honesty because of its present courage in attempting these tasks? Can absolute proof to the contrary be obtained without experiment? If so, is it not for "Economist" to produce it rather than a scared postulate of the sanity of those who differ from him? One would like to have "Economist's" idea of money.

I have the honour to remain

Your obedient servant,

H. P. HAIN FRISWELL.

GERMAN SAILORS ON BRITISH SHIPS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

118, Freeman Street, Grimsby.

SIR,—I am glad to notice the emphatic declaration of Havelock Wilson against Germans being allowed to man British craft after the war. A little while since, several fishing-boats were sunk by a Hun submarine. The pirate captain turned out to be a man who had for years been skipper of a Grimsby trawler. He asked the fishermen about people he knew at this port, and, having helped himself to whatever took his fancy, he put all the crews on one of the fishing-boats and sank the others.

Germans (doubtless spies) are said to have been very numerous here on fishing-craft prior to the war. How slow we have been!

Yours truly,

WILLIAM H. MARRIS.

SALE OF HONOURS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Middleton, Longparish, Nr. Whitechurch, Hants.

16 August 1917.

SIR,—Touching the award of honours, the honour of which appears to have abated somewhat of its royalty, Jehan de Meun, writing *circa* 1270, remarks with some insight:

"That nothing can confer noblesse

On any living man, unless

His hand some noble work hath done."

('Roman de la Rose,' Chap. XCIX.)

There is a pungency in these words, written in the "mediæval dark" of the thirteenth century, which might be lacking in the serene atmosphere of a classic quotation! But in these enlightened days such a sentiment could not conveniently be entertained by party whips.

Yours faithfully,

AURIOL DAVIDSON.

THE POPE AND GERMANY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

19 August 1917.

SIR,—I am surprised to see so incorrect a statement in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 18 August as: "Not one word of condemnation has issued from the Vatican of the massacres, tortures, and enslavement of Belgium; not a syllable of reprobation has fallen from the holy lips whilst Louvain and Ypres were sacked, the fairest portion of France turned wantonly into a black and smoking wilderness, and prisoners of war starved and maltreated," etc. And so goes on the paragraph of false statements. Not only has Christ's Vicar on Earth publicly condemned these outrages, but he has written three encyclicals condemning them, which were published in the leading newspapers of the world.

Yours faithfully,

BRIDEY O'REILLY,

Fellow, Inst. of Journalists, London.

REVIEWS.

'From Shakespeare to O. Henry. By S. P. B. Mais. Grant Richards. 5s. net.

MR. MAIS possesses the principal and most necessary qualification of the modern reviewer of current literature—an absolutely indiscriminate enthusiasm for books of the day. For Mr. Mais it is bliss in these times of wholesale publishing to be alive. Never was England so vocal a nest of singing birds. There were never so many astonishingly great novelists. Even the theatre, though it be for the moment under a revue cloud—occulted by the rosy mists of the Venusberg—was yesterday a repertory of great names, and after the war (for Mr. Mais enjoys the books which are going to be written as well as those which are already with us) will again concern itself with the grand realities as in the days of Barker and Galsworthy. Nor is Mr. Mais alone enthusiastic concerning his contemporaries. The modern reviewer must love the classics as well as the neo-classics; otherwise how could our centenaries be celebrated with so punctual an exultation? The modern reviewer, to give him his due, really thinks Shakespeare and Swift and Jane Austen as worthy of our admiration (at the proper time) as Mr. Bennett or the late O. Henry. Homer also was a genius and Milton, like Mr. Masefield, wrote immortal lines. Not even the dead need feel neglected in these enthusiastic days. We will not weary the reader with Mr. Mais's opinions. Suffice it that he exuberantly peppers his pages with glad allusions to books of every age and kind, and that he obviously loves them all, and, so far as we can ascertain, loves them all equally well. He confirms a suspicion which we have long held concerning the fate of Shakespeare, say, or Bunyan if they were suddenly to appear among us to-day. These great ones would not die of neglect or be killed by the critics. They would be accepted as original writers of great genius along with Mrs. Wilcox and Sir James Barrie. Our criticism has ceased to suffer from the paralysing judgment of a Jeffrey. It suffers instead (and pray heaven that it be not a worse affliction!) from the desolating catholicity of taste which gorges indifferently upon Blake and Miss Corelli, upon Goldsmith and Mr. E. F. Benson. Most people know the story of the candidate for reviewing honours who in recommending himself stated that his speciality was invective—general invective. That story has unhappily lost its point and is no longer relevant. The necessary gift to-day is not general invective but general approbation. The old critic who brought to bear upon contemporary literature a taste tempered by the classics, who had definite standards and exacted them, has become a legend. There is a flavour about him of Fee-faw-fum or Who Killed John Keats? There are no standards to-day. The critics are merely required to like what other people like, and the critic who likes such matter best is the best critic.

There is a good as well as a bad reason for this state of things. The good reason is that criticism has ceased to be formal. The romantic critics have taught us that forms and metres do not make poets and novelists, but that poets and novelists make forms and metres. No critic after Lamb or Coleridge could go about his business quite in the fashion of Dryden or Johnson. We hesitate to slay a poet to-day simply because his lines do not scan or because his rhymes are uncertain. The modern critic is nervous of applying the rules of art, and has even hinted an occasional doubt of their existence. This makes the critic modest and careful—which is no bad thing. But unfortunately criticism has not only ceased to be formal. It has also ceased to be discriminating—which is quite another matter. Dryden made some bad mistakes in applying the seventeenth century formal discipline to sixteenth century literature. A schoolboy is able to make fun of Dryden's preface to "The Tempest" as improved by himself and

D'Avenant. But Dryden if he were alive to-day would make short work of many established literary reputations "swollen with the rank mist they draw" from the lavish praise of the reviewers. For Dryden had the power to distinguish. His mere literary common sense would have told him there was something wrong in using exactly the same language in appreciating Keats or Swift as in appreciating Mr. Walter de la Mare or Mr. Gilbert Chesterton.

One of the blunders of modern criticism is to assume that because criticism has ceased to be formal it has ceased to be difficult. The old formal criticism was really absurdly simple as compared with the task of the modern appreciator. It is true it required scholars, prosodists, and grammarians for its practitioners—men who had studied literature and knew the rules. But literature can be studied and rules can be mastered, whereas the modern critic is apparently required to tell the false from the true, the first from the second rate, by sheer process of divination. Where Dr. Johnson would by rule of thumb, by the application of certain universally accepted standards, have been able to put Mr. Masefield in his place (whatever that may be) the modern critic is left with nothing but his instinct to guide him. It sounds simple enough, for "instinct" is easily said and stands for something to which we all lay claim. But we suggest that in this case it stands for nothing less than the rarest quality in human nature—the ability to move with ease and rectitude in regions where taste and imagination are the supreme arbiters.

However, the large body of readers who pretend to criticise or notice books have swallowed the assumption that modern criticism, being a matter of taste, can usefully be pursued by the unassisted light of nature; that there are no rules; and (since this is a democratic age) that one man's opinion is as good as another. There is accordingly no longer any reason why books should be damned, unless it be that the critic is a sour, ill-natured fellow who has not learned that to read all is to forgive all. When a reviewer is not bound by any accepted standard to be hard upon the book of the week, there is obviously no reason why he should not praise it, unless he happens to dislike the author, or to be neglected by the publisher, or to have a naturally inhumane and limited nature. Clearly the more a man can find to approve in the work of his fellow men the more liberal, sympathetic, and discerning he must be. Admittedly there are scores of clever writers of prose and verse to-day who are read by scores of thousands of people. To be blind to their merit is to be bilious in mind, body or estate. And so it comes about that praise, universal and intense, has come to be recognised as the sign of the good critic. Every day new poets, new novelists, and new dramatists are discovered and discussed in terms which Johnson would have hesitated to employ of Homer himself. Mr. Mais, who has been a schoolmaster, has an unfair advantage over the ordinary reviewer, in that he is not even limited to the fully fledged works of genius which issue monthly from the presses. He can tell us of young Masefields not yet out of MS., of sucking Keats's of whose work "I can only murmur to myself, 'Exquisite,' 'Beautiful'"—young poets of sixteen years or so who prompt in Mr. Mais the staggering reflection "that there are probably hundreds of poets at this moment working quietly in this country as good as these, of whom we have heard literally nothing." Of his more ordinary opportunities Mr. Mais avails himself to the full. Though we disclaim any intention of dealing with Mr. Mais's opinions in detail, we are bound in fairness to ourselves to indicate the intensity and scope of his enthusiasm. Among the novelists he finds a "score or so of great writers, of whom ten at least stand right out from their generation and deserve to live so long as English literature is read. . . . Mackenzie may or may not (Mr. Mais has here an unusual access of caution) be one of those ten," but he has a "claim to greatness," and of "Guy and Pauline" Mr. Mais proclaims that "there

is nothing like it in the language." Of the poets Mr. Mais is even more assured: "There has never been an age so rich in poets in history as our own. . . . We live in a time of amazing literary geniuses." To the theatre before the war "most of the leading geniuses of our time had contributed their quota. . . . There were also meteoric flights of poetic geniuses who neither followed nor founded any school, but flashed brilliantly for an hour and then swept by."

There is matter for reflection in this book of Mr. Mais. It is too typical a work to be passed over as merely indicating a habit of self-indulgence upon the part of a literary glutton. We are glad to think that Mr. Mais and his like really enjoy Shakespeare and Swift and Fielding; but we remember Wilhelm Meister at the play. He was enchanted when the audience applauded a tragedy. How glorious to be a tragedian and to move the multitude to such noble ends! But after the tragedy came a professional contortionist who pleased the multitude even better than the tragedy had done. Whereupon Wilhelm began to have his doubts concerning the precise value and quality of the multitude's affection for the tragedy. The celebration of great men by critics who use almost precisely the same language concerning every third book which issues from the publishers may be less significant of taste and judgment than it seems. We may be moved to remember the saying of La Rochefoucauld concerning those whose praise of others is really intended to proclaim their own discernment. Critics who write like Mr. Mais often intend no more than to say: "I see great merit here of which a less alert and imaginative man might excusably be unaware."

The Western Front. 100 Drawings by Muirhead Bone, with Text by C. E. Montague, and an Introduction by Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig. Published for the Government. "Country Life" Offices. Vol. 1. 15s. 1917.

BUT for Sir Douglas Haig's preface to Mr. Muirhead Bone's drawings we should take them to be the spare time jottings of an artist engaged on other and more serious business. Reading, however, from Sir Douglas that these very drawings will turn out to be "invaluable aids to the right reading of history" because "they permanently record the duties which our soldiers have been called upon to perform, and the quality and manner of its performance," we are fairly puzzled. For with the exception of the machine and architectural drawings there seem to us to be peculiarly few that throw any light upon our soldiers or their performances, that will calculably assist historians to reconstruct the significant life of the war. To our sorrow we have to enter here a recommendation that the said historians shall put their trust in "the film" photographs rather than in any human interest supplied by Mr. Bone.

Against the humiliation of this confession, that the camera has beaten the artist, we can set off, however, the reflection that the drawings which evoked Mr. Bone's essential interest—for example, Giant Sloters, Great Guns (notably No. 70), Battleships (81-83), and Tanks, express an emotion impossible for even supersensitised plates or films to feel. These drawings are extraordinarily good—in short a master's, and as big in significance and design as the others are trivial and meaningless. This recognition rouses question. Why are Mr. Bone's drawings of the human significance of the war so inadequate while his interpretation of its mechanism is so powerful? The reply that he had better facilities for studying his guns and ships is just, but not complete. For his landscape drawings are quite as ineffectual in design and character as his notes of men, though he must have had ample opportunities for close observation of the trenches, the craters, and

special formation of a stricken and accursed land. One can but conclude that Mr. Bone's qualifications for the job of historical draughtsman to the Great War are but partial, and that he is disabled by excessive specialisation of sympathy. Or, perhaps, one should say that either from want of opportunity or judgment he has missed that aspect of the Western Front of which the historians he is intended to illumine will be most in need. We may be sure that they will need, if their histories are to be comprehending, some authentic light upon the individuality of the amazing New Army that saved the world, and clear documentary information about its ways and means, its trenches, its trench life, its labours and diversions and the immense business of supply and transport. The notes and sketches Mr. Bone has placed at history's elbow are astonishingly void of special individuality. It is all very well for his commentator at G.H.Q., France, to say, "It is hoped that Mr. Bone's drawings will give new insight into the spirit in which the battle for freedom is being fought." All very nice for him to tell us that "an artist does not merely draw ruined churches, guards and lorries, doctors and wounded men. It is for him to make us see something more than we do, even when we see all these with our own eyes—to make visible by his art the staunchness and patience, the faithful absorption in the next duty, the humour, the human decency and good nature—all the strains of character and emotion that go to make up the temper of Britain at war." That is very right and proper, and a stimulating overture. It is as though the orchestra played solemn and uplifting chords, keying the audience to high expectancy of great opera. But on the rising of the curtain an entertainment is exposed disconcertingly inconsistent with the overture and far slighter in conception than the promise of those moving strains.

So to the historians who, building on Sir Douglas Haig's and the other writer's guarantee and pious hope, will have consulted this volume for revelations of the British soldier's qualities and fortitude, Mr. Bone's drawings will give hardly more than little blots of figures, engaged in the casual task of eking out experiments in a Claudian or Rembrandtesque style of landscape sketching.

Sven Hedin, Nobleman. An Open Letter. By K. G. Ossianilsson. Translated by H. G. Wright. Unwin. 3s. 6d. net.

NOBLESSE oblige! Patents of nobility have fallen upon an irreverent generation, but never was an ancient order more dishonoured, never was there surer indication that the age of chivalry has gone, than by the ennobling of Sven Hedin, whose name and titles were, none too soon, expunged from the records of the Royal Geographical Society.

On few explorers, certainly on none less deserving of such largesse, has Fortune showered her gifts more generously than on Hedin, who, at an age when most adventurers are still far removed from the goal of their ambitions, found himself acclaimed by every civilised country in the world, a man whom emperors, presidents and learned societies delighted to honour, the pride of his country, the envy of his fellows. History furnishes many such cases, for the amazement of posterity, of easily earned reputations on which, for no very apparent reason, contemporary criticism has set the highest value. At no time like the present, which marks the zenith of the personal note, seeking its literature in 'Who's Who' and the illustrated weeklies, have the delectable methods of the advance agent of a Yankee circus, the big drum and the coloured poster, been so successfully applied to the making of fame. Those who had some small part in expelling this German-Swede from a Society which honoured

Nansen had some difficulty in exhibiting him in his true colours, so confusing of perspective was the glamour in which he had wrapped a none too pleasing personality. They knew that the remoteness of most of his Asiatic Itinerary compelled the world to accept his own version uncorroborated. They could serve no purpose by condemning the literary canons of an author whose prose was no less arid than the deserts it described, since literary achievement is rarely proportionate to eminence in other fields. They realised the part he had played in the politics of his own country and the extent to which he had been infected by the poison of Kultur as distilled in the imperial laboratories of the Rhineland. Yet they lacked a coherent and accurate story of the real Sven Hedin, for the simple reason that he is neither coherent nor accurate, and they had only such material as had been published by himself, about as reliable, one may assume, as an autobiography of his august model, the German Emperor.

They might have learned much from Mr. Ossian-nilsson's Open Letter. It is a long letter—upwards of two hundred pages—but it contains as damning indictment of a charlatan as anything from the pen of "Junius." It shows Hedin stripped of all his tinsel, the toady of German royalties, the comrade of Turkish assassins, the whitewasher of crimes as monstrous as any in the history of the world. And these coldly sarcastic pages are the more convincing because they are written by a man whom, but ten years ago, Hedin counted among his warmest admirers, and who has reluctantly come to the conclusion that his idol stands on feet of clay.

In enrolling himself among the infinite band of spies, agents, pimps and propagandists who serve the Kaiser, Sven Hedin is curiously true to a type elsewhere illustrated by such delectable figures as Enver and Houston Chamberlain, since, like them, he has been a traitor to his own people. This was inevitable, since it is an axiom of Prussian policy that a foreigner cannot associate himself with Germany unless he also betrays his own country. This, which already applies to subjects of Entente or neutral lands, will one day be recognised as equally true of those Austrians, Turks and Bulgars who forced their countrymen in line with the war plans of the Wilhelmsstrasse. It is true that Hedin has failed to coax or bully his countrymen into sending their sons to die for Germany, but this was thanks to their own shrewdness, and not to any want of effort on his part. For the past three years he has been dinning into their ears his very vile justification of Hun massacres in Belgium and of Turkish atrocities in Armenia, and in his "Words of Warning" he endeavoured to terrify them with the bogey of a victorious Russia having fell designs on a little neighbour. How near his plot came to fruition those only can realise who were in Stockholm, particularly just after the hurried return of "the most remarkable woman in Europe" from Karlsruhe. This finds no part in the "Open Letter"—it could hardly be expected from so good a patriot as the author—but he knows his subject through and through, and is a sounder guide to Hedin than Hedin himself to the Belgian battlefields.

Than the attitude of a public character like Sven Hedin towards the fate of the Belgians and Armenians there could well be nothing more contemptible, even in the German propagandist literature of the present war. Those whose lot is cast in neutral countries are compelled to come in daily contact with Germans, willing exiles from a none too well-fed Fatherland, who blatantly uphold the worst excesses of Kultur, and turn a deaf ear to any criticism of "all-highest," but they are less frequently confronted by the spectacle of neutrals going out of their way to explain crimes that Europe has not witnessed since the Sicilian Vespers and St. Bartholomew's Eve, as mere exuberant frolic. The sight of a man of Hedin's position standing for such horrors would be enough to make one lose faith in humanity but that, with a German rabbi

for his grandfather, he has some excuse for answering the call of the blood. And his countrymen have even more for repudiating his claim to pose as a typical Swede.

If anything could excite more disgust than Hedin's championship of the Kaiser—here, again, there is the excuse of that glamour which royalty is apt to cast about a vulgar mind—it is his admiration for that bloodthirsty company of assassins, Enver, Talaat and Djemal. The blood of a million Armenians cries for justice, and cries in vain, for Hedin is as deaf in Asia Minor as he is blind in Belgium, hearing only with the ears of Stamboul, seeing only through the eyes of Potsdam. Thus does he betray humanity.

Fortunately his power for evil is gone. This "Open Letter" has set the seal on his infamy and has reduced him to his true proportions, the puppet that dances at the Kaiser's bidding. Paralysis is creeping over the hand that pulls the strings, and for the rest of Hedin's dishonoured life both he and his long-suffering generation will be at rest.

Our Money and the State. By Hartley Withers. John Murray. 3s. net.

THIS is a book written with that lucidity which is characteristic of Mr. Withers' many contributions to economic literature. Mr. Withers has the happy faculty of taking, as it were, his readers into his confidence, with the result that the critic is disarmed, but what is more important, the student is attracted. After discussing the limitations of State action, and consequently of State expenditure and taxation, and contrasting the *laissez faire* with the alternative Socialistic school of general interference with our individual activities, the author arrives at a compromise between the two extreme views. The argument is accepted that logically the State is entitled to take all our goods and services in promoting the public good; but Mr. Withers observes that the exercise of this right is circumscribed by the ability of the taxpayer to "strike," and that the State right is modified "by the very real power of the citizen to refuse to produce either the work or the property that the State had the power to take."

Mr. Withers then proceeds to discuss the two methods by which the Government can acquire such goods and services as are needed by it—taxation or loan. And it is the author's predilection in favour of the first alternative, taxation pure and simple, which we are inclined to think offers most ground for criticism in a work which is full of controversial points. The keynote of the argument is that "Posterity never pays," and here let us say at once that this view, if true, amounts to a real discovery which will largely affect economic thought and action. Is there anyone up to now who has not believed that in some way or other posterity can be made to pay for the present war expenditure? It is a common phrase that the nation is even now paying for the Napoleonic Wars. Whatever the State requires for the conduct of the war (eliminating foreign loans) must be paid for here and now. It is present goods and services that are wanted, and by no possible *leger de main* can posterity, that is to say, the whole of posterity, be made to bear this burden. The future payment of interest on, and ultimate redemption of present day loans, merely involves the transfer of money from the pocket of one future citizen to that of another, and in that sense there can be no doubt that the total wealth of "posterity" considered as a unit, will remain unaltered.

Mr. Withers of course realises that posterity may lose the result or benefit of productive activities which are in abeyance during the war, but that aspect of the case is not under discussion.

Having come to the conclusion that "posterity never

pays," Mr. Withers develops his thesis with all the zeal of a convert, and herein we think he allows his enthusiasm at his discovery to warp his judgment. Inasmuch as the war must be paid for now by goods and services, he can see no advantage in adopting a cumbrous system of loans through which we persuade ourselves into believing that we have avoided present liability. "By borrowing for War" Mr. Withers writes:—

"A Government sets up a process by which the war is paid for three times over. First, it is paid for as it goes on by the citizens who subscribed to the loans; then it is paid for by the citizens as a whole, who provide the money needed for this purpose, *plus* interest by taxation; and the Government finally hands the money back to the original subscribers or their estates."

Why, therefore, so runs the argument, should we not pay for the war straight away, postulating of course, a truly equitable system of taxation. Mr. Withers admits that payment by taxation alone is not to-day a practicable proposition, loans unfortunately being unavoidable; but as an ideal that is what we should aim at. Pending this realisation, a progressive increase in taxation is advocated, as the War proceeds.

For our part, we cannot see how in any circumstances a system of paying for the war by taxation alone can be fair. The war is being waged to give ourselves and those who come after us freedom, national security, and so forth, and it seems only just to us that the earners of the *future* incomes after the war, who, *ex hypothesi*, will benefit by our present payments, should divide and share with us or our heirs, the burden of interest and debt redemption. It would appear inequitable, under the proposed system of paying for the war by immediate taxation, that an individual with no present taxable income, but earning a large income in the future, should thereby escape all contribution.

On the subject of taxation generally Mr. Withers confounds ethics with financial policy. To tax what a man spends instead of what he earns can only be done by indirect taxation, which Mr. Withers condemns. He supports direct as opposed to indirect taxation on the ground that civic responsibility should be brought home to everyone, and further that indirect taxation is inequitable, inasmuch as the ability to pay and the sacrifice involved, *e.g.*, in the tax on a pound of tobacco, is very different in the case of a poor as against a rich man. This is unscientific, because it mixes up moral and social predilections with the science of getting as much money as the State can with the least resistance or injury to the common weal. Mr. Withers approves the Fabian suggestion that the money spent in the upbringing of families should be practically exempt from taxation. This is, in our judgment, a foolish and mischievous proposition, quite irreconcilable with the principle of taxing expenditure. The spending of money on children is a pleasure, quite as much as expenditure on other amusements; a higher pleasure, if you like, than buying a motor, but still a gratification. We see no reason why it should be exempt from taxation, unless the object be to encourage imprudent marriages, and reckless procreation.

Palestine: the Rebirth of an Ancient People. By A. M. Hyamson. Sidgwick and Jackson. 10s. 6d. net.

THE idea of the return of the Jews to Palestine in supposed fulfilment of prophecy has possessed a curious fascination for many Christians. As that eccentric genius, Lawrence Oliphant wrote in 1870 when advocating a large Jewish agricultural settlement in Galilee:—

"Any amount of money can be raised upon it, owing

to the belief which people have that they would be fulfilling prophecy and bringing on the end of the world. I don't know why they are so anxious for this latter event, but it makes the commercial speculation easy, as it is a combination of the financial and sentimental elements which will, I think, ensure success. And it will be a good political move for the Government, as it will enable them to carry out reforms in Asiatic Turkey, provide money for the Porte, and by uniting the French in it, and possibly the Italians, be a powerful religious move against the Russians, who are trying to obtain a hold of the country by their pilgrims. It would also secure the Government a large religious support in this country, as even the Radicals would waive their political in favour of their religious crochets. I also anticipate a very good subscription from America."

Oliphant's project had the personal approval of the Prime Minister, Lord Beaconsfield (Mr. Hyamson tells us) and of the Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury. Yet it fell through, as did other similar projects, because the notion of regaining Palestine by their own work has not appealed much to the Jews themselves until the last ten years. Even now a large proportion of the Jews throughout the world regard the efforts being made in this direction with extreme disfavour. Praying ever for the restoration of the old theocracy, typified in the Temple and its sacrifices, they are horrified at the modern Zionist's ideal of a Jewish State on European lines, based upon nationality rather than faith, a State in which every citizen will be quite free to choose his own religion. Mr. Hyamson's book is an eloquent and lucid statement of the case for the new idealists, and an account of the immense amount of excellent, progressive work which they have done in a short while. His early chapters are devoted to a history of the land in its connection with the Jews from the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 to the present day; and he succeeds in showing that his people have never been unrepresented in the population even at the worst of times. After the general massacre which followed the suppression of Bar Cochba's insurrection in A.D. 134 they ceased to be a factor of importance, but settlements of Jews, chiefly for purposes of rabbinical study, have always existed; and these have grown and thriven or become reduced according to the attitude of the existing Government. These students in the Holy Land have been maintained by alms collected throughout the Diaspora, and have been as the central point of scattered Judaism. Thus the national connection with the land has never been entirely severed, from the Jewish point of view. Upon the other hand, there was no active thought of its recovery by economic or political means until the late nineteenth century, nor any serious movement to attain that end until the twentieth.

Mr. Hyamson does justice to the toleration of the Muslim rulers of the country as compared with all the Christian rulers it has ever known, laying due emphasis upon the fact that Jews at divers periods fled to the Turkish Empire to escape the tortures of the Inquisition. His brief survey of the Muslim and Crusading periods is illuminating and correct. But the unique interest of his work lies in the part concerned with modern Zionism and the actual work of colonisation and education which it has so far achieved. The colonisation movement was at the outset purely philanthropic; its purpose being to provide healthy homes and occupations for the fugitives from Russian persecution. The early colonists were unlucky and unused to agriculture, and their venture would have been a tragic failure if, for success, it had depended solely on their efforts. Only by assistance from rich Jews in Europe, especially Baron Edmund de Rothschild, who provided money, labour and instructors, were the first colonies established and made self-supporting. But no amount of charitable donations could have given to the movement the vitality it

has attained within the last few years. This is the work of a group of idealists, of whom Mr. Hyamson is one, and it is with legitimate pride that he dilates on the improvement of the older colonies and the growth of new ones, upon their order, sanitation and prosperity. These colonies, four of which have been visited by the present writer at various times, are model villages, autonomous, and built upon the garden city plan. But we doubt if Mr. Hyamson is quite exact in claiming the idea of them as purely Jewish, or, indeed, in claiming that the Jews were pioneers of modern agricultural methods in the Holy Land; for the German colonies of the Temple sect of Protestants were there before them, and the early Jewish colonists owed much to their example. The work of Bertdensperger in restoring the gardens of Artass is even earlier. It might be argued that the Jews, though they have distanced all competitors, have done so by the help of wealth derived from other lands.

The chapters dealing with the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language, and with the educational forces at work to rouse a national Jewish spirit are most interesting. Those who have known the Turkish Empire at all intimately in the last few years will be struck by the close resemblance of Mr. Hyamson's ideals to those of the Islamic revival and the Young Turk movement, and will thus feel no surprise when they discover that the Jewish idealists have a friendly feeling for the Turkish Government.

"If circumstances had followed a normal course," writes Mr. Hyamson, "more and more Jews would have settled in Palestine, and been born there. Further and further tracts would have been brought under cultivation. . . . Palestine would once again have become a land flowing with milk and honey, bringing material and intellectual as well as spiritual benefits to humanity. In the Turkish Empire a rich province would have taken the place of a derelict land. The Jews of Palestine, the one progressive element in the population, would have benefited greatly, and would, in the course of time, have acquired an overwhelming influence in the local government."

Further than that, they would have had the field of Turkish official employment open to them. Mr. Hyamson is naturally anxious for the future of Zion if any other Power should take the place of Turkey. He does not state his reasons for anxiety; but the present writer, knowing something of affairs in Palestine, can guess within a little what they would be.

The Jews are not yet a majority of the inhabitants. The Muslims, taking towns and country together, still amount to a rough half of the population, and the native Christians are not inconsiderable. No other Power than Turkey would be likely to allow the Jews such full autonomy. Some of their institutions might be interfered with in the cause of unity. They would have to fear a serious competition in the exploitation of the land and the development of commerce. The best alternative that Mr. Hyamson can see to Turkish rule is that England should assume the burden of the country, and reserve its profits to the Jews (or so we read him). But others of the author's nation clamour for an independent Jewish State. Why does Mr. Hyamson refrain from this demand? Surely because he has a lofty and enlightened vision of what the Jewish State, when it arrives, should be; and knows that the general level of education of the Jews in Palestine is not at present such as to allow that vision to be realised.

So many are the troubles in store for the country and the world if Palestine should be detached from the Ottoman Empire that one cannot imagine any native of that land rejoicing in so wretchedly obscure a prospect. What the reader most admires in Mr. Hyamson is his complete sincerity; he admits us to the very heart of Zionism, and his pure enthusiasm cannot fail to win the sympathy even of those who do not quite agree with him.

THE CITY.

"The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." —Ecclesiastes.

WHAT bankers and stockbrokers think of the prospect of an increased income-tax may be inferred from the price of the 4 Per Cent. War Loan, which is free of tax, and which has risen to 102½. The people who have been really badly treated by the Government are the great subscribers to the first War Loan, the Three and a Halfpence, which have never been given any rights of conversion, and which have been allowed to sink to 87. If we remember right, they were issued at 94, and its holders have lost seven points. Anyone who wishes to invest in British Government securities would do better to buy old Consols at 55 (they may fall to 50) than the 5 Per Cents. or the 4½ Per Cents. There is not much difference in return, and the interest of 2½ per cent. on Consols is so low that even a Labour Government could hardly propose to reduce it. There is the certainty of a rise in the price of old Consols, and almost a certainty of a fall in the price of the Fives and the Four and a Halfpence. One of three financial policies will probably be adopted by a Labour Government, which, by-the-bye, we have practically got already: viz., 1. The reduction of the rate of interest. 2. A tax on capital. 3. A permanent income-tax ranging from 8 to 12 per cent. The Fabian Society has started a propaganda in favour of a 10 per cent. tax on all capital.

One of the worst cases of American wild-cat finance in recent years was the Brazil Railway, of which the Ordinary Stock at one time rose to 120 and then fell to 35 about eight months before the war. When the war broke out Brazil Common fell to 5, and passed into the hands of a Receiver, who has now propounded a scheme for the benefit of the debenture and preference shareholders. It appears that a sum of £800,000 is wanted to put the railway on its legs, about £300,000 of which has been issued as Prior Lien bonds and underwritten by Frenchmen. South America generally, and Brazil in particular, will have a good time after the war: and anyone who can afford the luxury of a lock-up might do worse than help himself to Brazil Ordinary stock at rubbish prices.

The fact that the American Government has at last decided to support Carranza in Mexico, and has agreed to make a loan, is of great importance to the holders of all Mexican securities. The senior securities of the Mexican railways have fallen a great deal; and Mexico, together with all the States of Central America, is bound to recover with a bound as soon as peace comes. The Ordinary Stock of the International Railway of Central America (one of Minor Keith's railways) has fallen to 13 or 14 for \$100; and as the traffics have been good for the last twelve months, it is quite possible that a dividend of 2 or 3 per cent. may be paid. This Stock seems good for a 10 or 15 points rise.

Three or four weeks ago we drew attention to the excellent prospects of Burma Oils, which are so largely interested in Anglo-Persian Oil Concessions. Burmas have risen to 7, and will probably go to 10 before the end of the year. Their ultimate potential value it is impossible to gauge to-day.

Excessive and unjust taxation levied on the rich does not pay the Chancellor of the Exchequer: there are too many means of evasion, of quite legitimate evasion. Take the recently published will of Sir Joseph Lyons. It is inconceivable that the principal shareholder in Lyons and Co., and in Salmon and Gluckstein should not have amassed more than £56,000 in a fairly long life. No doubt, Sir Joseph, like a wise man, transferred large blocks of shares in his lifetime to others, as by the law he is allowed to do. Excessive death duty and unjust income-tax will always be evaded.